

10 Town Centres and High Streets

Introduction	282
TC1: Promoting town centres	283
TC2: Encouraging vibrant and resilient town centres	285
TC3: Floorspace above commercial premises	289
TC4: Markets	290
TC5: Meanwhile uses	291
TC6: Managing clustering in town centres	292



INTRODUCTION

- 10.1 Town centres offer an accessible focal point of commercial premises, shops, community facilities, leisure activities, and recreational opportunities for the surrounding communities. Attractive town centres have a positive impact on the area's image and character, they play a crucial role in attracting business and investments.
- 10.2 The evolving retail landscape, driven by changes in the retail sector combined with the continued growth of online shopping, requires planning policies that support the continued attractiveness and vibrancy of town centres. This support is essential to maintain their vitality and viability.
- 10.3 In the Borough, the primary retail hub is Enfield Town offering a range of comparison goods shops, leisure services and other amenities. There are also four district centres including Angel Edmonton, Edmonton Green, Palmers Green and Southgate, as well as several large local centres, mainly catering to convenience based shopping and local services in different parts of the Borough.
- 10.4 Policies in the ELP aim to ensure a diverse retail offer and customer choice within town centres and enhance their overall experience, promoting increased footfall and extended stays. Creating desirable and engaging town centres is fundamental to their long term success and the improvement of local area's image and character.
- 10.5 The Local Plan's strategy focuses on maintaining a range of uses within town centres, fostering an evening economy and establishing a hierarchy of centres. This hierarchy includes a strong, central core of retail and ancillary uses that support their vitality and viability and provide customers with various choices. The ELP also sets out a positive approach towards main town centre uses, defines the hierarchy of centres, explains the operation of the sequential test and impact assessment, and provides a framework within which to assess the appropriateness of development proposals within town centres.

STRATEGIC POLICY

TC1 : PROMOTING TOWN CENTRES

1. The long-term vitality and viability of Enfield’s designated town centres as defined on the Policies Map will be secured through the following:
 - a. focusing future growth and investment within and around town centres;
 - b. promoting a balance of residential and main town centre uses to help town centres function as multifunctional hubs, supporting the provision of facilities, services, job opportunities and homes;
 - c. maintaining and enhancing their distinctive features and characteristics where these make a positive contribution to the locality, including their built form, historic and cultural character;
 - d. managing streets and spaces to facilitate active travel, improve public transport connections to surrounding areas and reduce traffic flows along key routes;
 - e. reinforcing the diversity and range of activities within town centres through:
 - i. creating inviting public spaces through public realm improvements and cultural attractions to activate the street and foster a welcoming and safe environment;
 - ii. supporting the delivery of a range of workspaces to provide pedestrian footfall and promote a resilient economy; and
 - iii. encouraging connected communities by improving social, civic and cultural infrastructure.
 - f. promoting evening economy activities within town centres while mitigating potential adverse impacts; and
 - g. protecting and promoting commercial activities serving neighbourhood needs in local centres and parades.

EXPLANATION

- 10.6 Town centres are well connected hubs for a range of activities throughout the day, and evening. They offer accessible retail, commercial, cultural, leisure and civic facilities to both visitors and residents. The policies in the ELP aims to ensure that town centres continue to have an important role in supporting our local communities, which includes directing future growth and investments toward these town centre locations.
- 10.7 There is a need to ensure that town centres remain adaptable in the face of challenges to UK high streets. While retail remains a vital component of town centres, it is equally important that these centres have the ability to evolve and adapt over time, so that they continue to support the communities in which they are situated. Town centre locations provide opportunities for the re-use of buildings, including for other commercial, cultural, leisure and community activities which help to attract visitors. Furthermore, town centres are increasingly becoming a focal point for higher-density, sustainable mixed-use developments, which can include housing.
- 10.8 Enfield's town centres have distinctive characteristics that are reflected in their built form, historic fabric, cultural vibrancy and overall setting. Enfield's

Characterisation Study helps articulate these qualities. Where new development is proposed it is important that they contribute positively to the character of the townscape, as articulated in [Enfield's Character of Growth study \(2021\)](#). Furthermore, new developments will be expected to create high quality urban environments that are safe, accessible to all, and promote the health and well-being of the local population.

- 10.9 Town centres cater to the needs of workers, traders, visitors and residents, and host a range of civic, cultural and leisure activities. A well-designed and appropriately managed public realm network is essential to support these functions. It is also imperative that town centres remain lively and active places that can accommodate a variety of uses. People should have opportunities for leisure and relaxation throughout the day and evening, throughout the week and during different seasons. Enfield's town centres will be the focus of coordinated public realm improvements, particularly around important gateways such as stations and high streets.
- 10.10 Local centres and parades play a vital role in providing essential shops, facilities and services close to where people live. They serve as valuable capillaries that cater to suburban communities, enabling residents to

access everyday essentials within walking distance. Where possible, we will use our planning powers to protect ground floor commercial frontages in these areas.



Near Southgate

STRATEGIC POLICY

TC2: ENCOURAGING VIBRANT AND RESILIENT TOWN CENTRES

1. 1. Town centres should develop as vibrant and economically successful hubs which meet the needs of residents, workers and visitors in line with the following principles (refer to the Hierarchy of Town Centres set out in **Table 10.1**):
 - a. Enfield Town and the district centres of Angel Edmonton, Edmonton Green, Palmers Green and Southgate (as shown on the Policies Map) will accommodate a diverse range of town centre and community uses, along with new residential and employment development.
 - b. Proposals for commercial, business and service activities are acceptable in Primary Shopping Areas (as shown on the Policies Map) within Enfield Town and the district centres. Such proposals must provide active frontages to the public realm. Proposals for residential uses at ground floor level here will be refused.
 - c. Local centres and parades (as shown on the Policies Map) will serve the retail, food and beverage, business, service and community needs of the local area. Changes of use at ground floor level must retain a shopfront and provide active frontages to the public realm. Proposals for residential uses at ground floor level here will be refused. New local centres will be designated within some strategic mixed-use site allocations to serve the day to day needs of new residents and workers.
2. All development must contribute positively to placemaking in town centres, including through supporting an attractive and accessible public realm, enhancing urban greening and links to blue and green networks, contribute to improving active and public transport links, and addressing anti-social behaviour and crime. New development should preserve designated and non-designated heritage assets and their wider setting while maximising opportunities for enhancements.
3. Proposals for town centre uses are appropriate in designated centres. In line with the sequential approach set out in the NPPF, proposals for town centre uses outside of designated centres must be able to demonstrate that sites firstly within, and then on the edge of existing centres are not available.
4. Outside designated centres, retail and leisure developments (including extensions, the introduction of mezzanine floors and changes of use) exceeding 400 square metres will be subject to an impact assessment.
5. Co-working spaces in town and local centre locations will be actively supported.

EXPLANATION

10.11 This policy seeks to support the growth of diverse and thriving town centres responding to the plan’s objective to create the workshop of London. It establishes a hierarchy of town centres and directs development to designated centres, as described in part 1 of this policy above and **Table 10.1**. Town centre uses are defined in the NPPF.

10.12 The extent of Enfield Town and the district centres, and the Primary Shopping Area within these centres are defined on the Policies Map. It also identifies the local centres and parades.

10.13 This policy seeks to maintain and enhance the role and function of the Borough’s designated centres, as defined above. The scale of development should also be appropriate to the size and function of the centre and its catchment area. New development will be expected to make a positive contribution to the vitality and vibrancy of our town centres through successful placemaking. Where applicable, opportunities should be taken to maximise urban greening and integration with blue and green networks. In line with part 3 of this policy, proposals for main town centre uses (as defined in the NPPF), will be directed towards existing centres rather than unsustainable out-of-

centre locations. Retail, leisure and office developments outside of the Borough’s centres will need to carry out a sequential assessment in line with the NPPF.

10.14 In situations where no suitable or available sites are present within the boundary of a centre, retail and leisure developments within edge of centre locations that are accessible by public transport, walking and cycling and well connected to and up to 300 metres from the centre, will be permitted. Moreover, retail and leisure developments within out-of-centre locations exceeding 400 square metres of floorspace (gross) will need to demonstrate that they will have no significant impact on the viability and vitality of these centres. In preparing these assessments, applicants must consider: Where there are no suitable or available sites within the boundary of a centre, retail and leisure developments within edge of centre locations that are accessible by public transport, walking and cycling and well connected to and up to 300 metres from the centre will be permitted. In addition, retail and leisure developments within out-of-centre locations above 400 square metres floorspace (gross) will need to demonstrate that they will have no significant impact on the viability and vitality of these centres. In preparing

these assessments, applicants will need to give due regard to:

- the scale of the proposal relative to existing centres;
 - the cumulative impacts of recent developments; and
 - the impact of the proposed development on the vitality and viability of the centre, including local customer choice and trade in the centre and wider catchment area.
- 10.15 Planning conditions will be imposed on developments outside centres to ensure that potential changes of use to town centre uses are restricted.
- 10.16 Proposals involving ‘click and collect’ parcel lockers will be supported when it can be demonstrated that proposed facilities would not cause harm to the character and appearance of the area, and will not impede pedestrian movement.

Table 10.1: Hierarchy of town centres

TIER	NAME OF CENTRE	ROLE AND FUNCTION
Major Centre	Enfield Town	This centre will continue to be the main focus of town centre uses and other uses which generate a high level of people movements, reflecting its wide catchment area and role as a sub-regional centre.
District Centres	Angel Edmonton Edmonton Green Southgate Palmers Green	Promote as vibrant and accessible hubs containing a wide range of convenience goods, community services and employment uses, serving the needs of the immediate catchment and beyond. The Primary Shopping Area is the same as the boundary of the town centre.
Large Local Centres	Baker Street; Bounces Road; Bowes Road; Bush Hill Park; Chase Side; Cockfosters; Enfield Highway; Enfield Wash; Green Lanes; Hertford Road Central, Lancaster Road, Meridian Water, Oakwood; Ordnance Road, Enfield Lock; Ponders End; Winchmore Hill, Broadway; Winchmore Hill, Green; and Winchmore Hill, Green Dragon.	Safeguard and promote the provision of day-to-day goods, services and community uses to meet the needs of local residents. Each typically accommodate over 40 outlets and over 4,000 sq m of gross floorspace.
Small Local Centres	Aldermans Hill; Arnos Grove; Bush Hill Parade; Cambridge Circus; Freezywater; Hertford Road South; Main Avenue; New Southgate; Silver Street; Windmill Hill; and Enfield Island Village.	As above. Each centre typically accommodates 20 – 40 outlets and less than 4,000 sq m of gross floorspace.

TIER	NAME OF CENTRE	ROLE AND FUNCTION
Local Shopping Parades	Barrowell Green; Brimsdown; Bullsmoor; Bury Street West; Carterhatch Lane; Chaseville Park; Durants Road; Dysons Road; Empire Parade; Enfield Lock; Enfield Road Linkside; Firs Lane; Green Street; Hadley Wood; Hazelbury Road, Edmonton; Hertford Road, North; High Street, Southgate; Hoppers Road; Huxley Parade; Kempe Road; Mottingham Road; Nightingale Road; Percival Road; South Street Ponders End; Southbury Road; Southbury Road/Kingsway, Ponders End; Southgate Green; The Grangeway; Town Road; Victoria Road; Westerham Avenue; Whittington Road, Bowes Park; Winchester Road; Bowes Road West; Chequers Way; Craig Park Road; Fillebrook Avenue; Highlands Village; Lincoln Court; and Clock Parade.	As above. Each centre typically accommodates 6 – 20 outlets (no floorspace defined).

Town Centres and High Streets

- Major Centre
- District Centre
- Local Centre

Town centre boundaries are currently under review and will be determined as part of the Reg-19 plan.



Figure 10.1: Hierarchy of town centres

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICY

TC3: FLOORSPACE ABOVE COMMERCIAL PREMISES

1. Proposals to re-use or refurbish the upper floors of shops and/or commercial premises within Enfield's town centres (as defined on the Policies Map) will be actively encouraged.
2. Proposals resulting in the net loss of residential or employment floorspace will be refused, unless proposals involve conversion to Class E floorspace.
3. All residential developments situated above shops and other commercial premises must meet all of the following criteria:
 - a. the proposal must provide separate and adequate access to the upper floor. Where possible, this entrance should be located on the principal elevation and integrated into a shopfront;
 - b. the proposal must not harm the existing commercial servicing and parking arrangements;
 - c. adequate arrangements for refuse storage and collection should be made; and
 - d. the proposal must not adversely affect the functionality or appearance of the units or the surrounding residential amenity.

EXPLANATION

- 10.17 Town centres serves as hubs for a diverse mix of activities, combining both commercial and residential functions. When vacant units exist above commercial premises in these town centres, it presents an ideal opportunity to attract residential uses to increase the numbers of people living within a sustainable location, while contributing towards the Borough's housing requirements. Moreover, encouraging the re-use or refurbishment of units above shops and other commercial premises for appropriate town centre uses, including leisure, entertainment, and intensive sport and recreation activities, offers multiple benefits. These benefits include enhancing the character of town centres, broadening the range of town centre services available, increasing natural surveillance, contributing to regeneration efforts and promoting sustainable utilisation of town centres. This approach also helps reduce the pressure for out of centre developments.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICY

TC4: MARKETS

1. Proposals affecting existing markets will only be supported where:
 - a. they result in a qualitative improvement to the market and public realm;
 - b. the number of trading pitches available will not be reduced; and
 - c. existing traders must be given the opportunity to take up these pitches. A strategy for existing traders to access these pitches should be secured as part of any planning application affecting existing markets.
2. Proposals for new markets will be encouraged where they support Enfield's town centre network and hierarchy and improve the cultural vibrancy of the Borough.
3. All proposals must include adequate arrangement measures to avoid or mitigate unreasonable impacts on the amenity of adjoining and neighbouring occupiers, as well as the wider local area.
4. Outdoor trading will be supported as long as it can be demonstrated that the merchandise will not negatively impact the appearance or functioning of the public realm.

EXPLANATION

- 10.18 Maintaining the vitality of existing markets is crucial for the liveliness of Enfield's town centres. This policy aims to ensure that there are no reductions in the availability of market spaces and that existing occupiers are protected from displacement.
- 10.19 New markets are wholeheartedly welcomed in centres where they can add to the appeal of these areas. Proposals for new markets should be accompanied by a design and management strategy to ensure they contribute to a safe, clean and attractive public realm and do not impede pedestrian movement.
- 10.20 All proposals must make adequate arrangements to avoid or mitigate unreasonable impacts on the amenity of adjoining and neighbouring occupiers, and wider local area. This includes addressing issues such as footpaths and road congestion, waste/refuse storage and collection, noise and odours. Proposals for street markets must demonstrate that there will be no detrimental effect on the functioning of the road network.



Enfield Town Market Square

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICY

TC5: MEANWHILE USES

1. Meanwhile uses should enhance the character and vitality of the area, maintain active ground floor frontages and retain any existing shopfronts. Meanwhile uses should ideally be precursors to the permanent development that follows, providing positive activation of sites for the economic, social and/or environmental benefits to the area.
2. Meanwhile creative, exhibition and performance spaces that align with Culture Connects⁶⁰ (or any succeeding versions) and The Heritage Strategy (or any succeeding versions) will be supported, provided they adhere to the agent of change principle.

⁶⁰ <https://new.enfield.gov.uk/services/your-council/culture-connects-strategy-2020-25.pdf>

EXPLANATION

- ^{10.21} Meanwhile uses are defined as the temporary use of land or buildings before a permanent use is introduced. They have the potential to support the vibrancy of centres by encouraging new business, community, cultural and environmental initiatives, while attracting visitors and footfall. They can help effectively address the issue of vacant units and sites, especially in the early phases of major developments. Developers are strongly encouraged to make vacant land or buildings available for meanwhile activities wherever possible. Multi-phased schemes should demonstrate how they have considered integrating meanwhile uses to activate spaces throughout construction.
- ^{10.22} Housing may be incorporated into meanwhile uses, serving as a means to offer much needed accommodation and to make efficient use of land while it is awaiting longer-term development. Any proposals for meanwhile housing will need to meet the standards for residential accommodation set out in the development plan.
- ^{10.23} By temporarily occupying land, buildings or units, meanwhile uses can be low cost and low risk, making them an attractive option to business start-ups, community groups and the creative and cultural sectors. These meanwhile uses can act as productive experimental testing ground for ideas that can be incorporated into the permanent developments that follow. Developers are required to put in place appropriate mechanisms to support occupiers of meanwhile spaces in securing permanent accommodation, including through signposting to appropriate opportunities, potentially within the eventual permanent development.
- ^{10.24} Meanwhile uses outside town centre locations will be supported, provided they adhere to the agent of change principle. Uses which are not considered suitable for meanwhile uses include vehicle parking.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICY

TC6: MANAGING CLUSTERING IN TOWN CENTRES

1. All development should actively contribute to the delivery of inclusive and mixed communities, including the vitality and viability of the Borough's centres. Proposals that lead to an overconcentration of hot food takeaways, betting shops, pawnbrokers, pay day loan shops, amusement centres and casinos will be resisted.
 - a. Such development must:
 - a. have no impact on neighbouring residential properties in terms of noise and disturbance; and
 - b. have adequate servicing arrangements and not result in an increase of on-street parking and traffic congestion in the surrounding area.
2. Proposals for establishing hot food takeaways, betting shops, pawnbrokers, pay day loan shops, amusement centres and casinos will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that:
 - a. the site is situated within a designated centre and will not result in an over-concentration of such establishments within any designated centre; and
 - b. they would not cause harm to amenity and the character of the area.
3. Applicants will be expected to submit a Cumulative Impact Assessment as part of any planning application.
4. Proposals for the provision or expansion of banqueting suites will be supported in town centres but resisted in out of town locations, including former retail parks.

EXPLANATION

- 10.25 To ensure that the Borough's future growth and development benefits its communities, it is important that planning policies promote an appropriate mix and balance of uses. Policies in the ELP seeks to carefully manage the location of uses recognising that over concentration of particular uses can have harmful impacts, including on the amenity of residential areas, the vitality of town centres and the well-being of the local population. In line with the London Plan, this policy seeks to manage the concentration and proliferation of hot food takeaways, betting shops, pawnbrokers, pay-day loan shops and amusement centres, and their potentially harmful effects on individuals and communities. However, proposals will be considered on their individual merits.
- 10.26 Planning applications for hot food takeaways, betting shops, pawnbrokers, pay day loan shops, amusement centres and casinos will be assessed having regard to the number and location of units within the major, district or local centre. These planning applications must be accompanied with sufficient information to assess the potential impacts of the proposed use arising, including a Cumulative Impact Assessment.
- 10.27 Cumulative Impact Assessments should consider the existing distribution of hot food takeaways, betting shops, pawnbrokers, pay day loan shops, amusement centres and casinos within 400 metres (a 5 minute walk) of the application site, and set out measures by which the character, amenity and wellbeing of local residents can be safeguarded.
- 10.28 Hot food takeaways have the potential to negatively affect the health and well-being of local communities. This policy helps give effect to the London Plan Policy E9 (Retail, markets and hot food takeaways), which encourages Boroughs manage the concentration of such uses.
- 10.29 The London Plan indicates that hot food takeaway uses should not be permitted where these are within 400 metres walking distance from the entrances and exits of an existing or proposed primary or secondary school.
- 10.30 Where planning applications for hot food takeaways are permitted, conditions may be used to ensure compliance with Healthier Catering Commitment standards.
- 10.31 Banqueting suites can add to the vitality of town centres where they can be sustainably accommodated, offering easy accessibility by foot, bicycle and public transport. They are not appropriate in out-of-centre locations. Banqueting suites should not lead to negative impacts on the surrounding area.